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The situation in Afghanistan

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/13 and Security Council resolution 2041 (2012), in which the Council requested me to report on developments in Afghanistan every three months.

2. The present report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since my previous report of 20 June 2012 (A/66/855-S/2012/462). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan.

II. Relevant developments

A. Political developments

3. During the reporting period, the attention of Afghan and international stakeholders was focused on preparations for and follow-up to the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, held on 8 July and co-chaired by the Governments of Japan and Afghanistan. The number of high-level representatives present and scale of financial pledges made at the conference clearly demonstrate that Afghanistan will not be abandoned even as the international military presence draws down. The international community pledged to continue to provide assistance during the transition into the transformation decade of 2015-2024, contingent upon Government progress in key areas.

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4. Before the conference, on 21 June, the President of Afghanistan, Hâmid Karzai, addressed a special joint session of the National Assembly. He pledged to dedicate the remaining two years of his tenure to furthering good governance, accountability and aid effectiveness. Following the conference, on 27 July, he issued a presidential decree in which he set out specific, time-bound actions for Government ministries and agencies, focusing on some aspects of the commitments made at the Tokyo Conference by the Government to countering impunity and corruption and to strengthening Government structures.

5. In the Tokyo Declaration and the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Tokyo Conference participants reiterated their commitment to holding credible and inclusive presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2015, in accordance with the Constitution. Agreement on the legal and technical framework is now needed. In particular, the passage of the electoral law and the law on the duties and structure of the Independent Election Commission should be secured within the first quarter of 2013, a year before polling. The former is currently with the Ministry of Justice and should, according to the presidential decree of 27 July, be presented to the Council of Ministers by the end of September 2012. The latter, regulating appointments to leadership positions on the Commission, is now with the lower house of the National Assembly. Credible appointees and a consultative process, even if the law is not agreed, are essential to ensuring wider trust in the process. In another development, on 10 July, the Chief Electoral Officer of the Independent Election Commission announced his resignation, while the term of the Commission's current Chair expires in April 2013.

6. At the Commission's request, a three-person voter registry feasibility study team, facilitated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) electoral support project, ELECT II (Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, second phase), assessed means of improving the voter registry for the next electoral process. The findings of the assessment were presented to the Commission on 31 July. The team recommended that a phased voter registration exercise, tying voters to polling centres, would best help to mitigate against fraud, improve operational planning and provide a sustainable basis for voter identification. After meeting the Commission, the President, on 1 August, expressed his general support, directing that there be discussions with the Ministry of Finance on funding mechanisms. Prospective international donors have requested further information on political, security and other risks and possible mitigation strategies for what would be a costly and ambitious exercise.

7. The next electoral cycle continues to attract intense political interest among Afghan stakeholders. The two major political coalitions, the National Front of Afghanistan and the National Coalition of Afghanistan, have held joint meetings with other groups, including the Right and Justice Party and Hizb-i Islami, and generally favour a greater role for political parties in the electoral framework. On 12 July, Hizb-i Islami, led by Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal, also held its own national gathering in Kabul with more than 2,000 attendees, where support for the peace process and the need for active participation in the 2014 polls were stressed. A new regulation issued on 11 July, requiring parties to have offices in 20 provinces to able to register officially, has, however, prompted some concern at potential restrictions on political activity.

8. Considerable diplomatic activity between the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan was focused on cross-border issues. Pakistani officials have complained that armed groups based in Afghanistan are raiding Dir district and Bajaur Agency. On 25 June, the Deputy Ambassador of Afghanistan in Islamabad was summoned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan to receive a strong protest in relation to reports that some 100 militants had crossed the border in Dir the previous evening and killed six Pakistani security force personnel and 11 militia members. On 22 July, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Wed Ludin, telephoned the Ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul to convey serious concern at alleged shelling in the Province of Kunar by Pakistani forces. On 15 August, the Presidents of Afghanistan and Pakistan met in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, on the margins of the fourth extraordinary session of the Islamic Summit Conference, organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and agreed to establish a joint military delegation to investigate the incidents. On 25 August, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) stated that the leader of the Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-i-Taliban), Maulawi Dadullah, had been among insurgents killed in an air strike in Kunar the previous day.

9. Cross-border shelling in Kunar was one of the reasons stated for the interpellation on 4 August of the ministers of defence and the interior, Abdul Rahim Wardak and Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, by the lower house of the National Assembly. Other criticisms included corruption in both ministries, the lack of respect for the legislature and the performance of the Minister of the Interior. The legislators passed a vote of no confidence in the two ministers. Subsequently, the National Security Council publicly stated its respect for the Assembly's decision and the President instructed both ministers to continue in office as caretakers. On 7 August, Mr. Wardak resigned and was later appointed as Senior Security Adviser to the President.

10. In response to a request from the Government, on 19 July, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) approved the delisting of the Minister of Finance under the Taliban regime, Abdul Wasay Mu'tasim Agha. A total of 20 individuals have been delisted since 17 June 2011, when the measures were imposed. The Security Council is currently reviewing the implementation of the measures established by resolution 1988, to be completed by the end of 2012, with a view to ensuring that mandated tasks and activities are best oriented to support wider peace and stability efforts.

11. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continued to provide analytical, advisory and logistical support to the work of the High Peace Council and, together with UNDP, to the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme, which is aimed at drawing lower-level fighters off the battlefield. According to the joint secretariat of the Programme, by mid-August, 5,025 former anti-Government elements had been formally enrolled. Some 10 per cent are now working in the humanitarian demining sector, supported by the United Nations Mine Action Service, and are contributing to fulfilling the Government's obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Their active participation as local community members, concerned for their community, is a positive result of overall rehabilitation and reintegration efforts. Through its membership of the Programme's technical committee, UNAMA continues to

advocate and provide advice on issues relating to vetting, community participation, impunity and security for reintegrated fighters.

12. The High Peace Council, under the chairship of Salahuddin Rabbani, has sought to reinvigorate activities aimed at creating political conditions conducive to a durable peace process. Practical initiatives by the Council to reach out to a wider spectrum of Afghan society, such as women, young people and religious representatives, include the creation of a civil society working group. On 2 July, the Chair and senior members of the Council visited Saudi Arabia and agreed with their Saudi Arabian counterparts on the need to work with Pakistan in advancing the peace process and to utilize the important role of religious scholars and leaders. A planned visit to Pakistan by Council members early in August was, however, postponed, reportedly in response to cross-border shelling in Kunar.

13. More than 150 prominent scholars, civil society activists and religious leaders from across the region gathered in Kabul for the second conference of international Islamic cooperation for a peaceful Afghanistan, at which my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, delivered a keynote speech. On 21 June, the participants issued a final statement in which they condemned suicide bombing and other indiscriminate violence against civilians, including attacks on holy venues, religious ceremonies, marketplaces and public gatherings. Local initiatives also saw the governors of Kandahar and Uruzgan Provinces, with the assistance of UNAMA, hold traditional gatherings. On 2 July, hundreds of religious scholars and tribal elders met in Tirin Kot and released an 11-point declaration in favour of reconciliation. On 15 July, at a similar event in Kandahar, participants adopted a 15-point resolution, emphasizing the need for the rule of law, reform of security agencies and improved outreach by provincial peace committees.

B. Security developments

14. The third tranche of the transition of security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces progressed as planned, with the forces taking responsibility for Kapisa, Kunduz and Uruzgan Provinces, in addition to the entirety of Kandahar Province, covering 75 per cent of the Afghan population. There has been no significant deterioration of public order or security in areas in which the transition has taken place. The Government-mandated Transition Coordination Commission is currently focused on preparations for the final two phases of the transition.

15. Since May, widespread attention has been paid to reports of a popular uprising in the Andar district of Ghazni Province, with violent clashes between the Taliban and other armed actors seeking control of the territory. Amid a complex and evolving conflict, similar reports of resistance against Taliban strictures have been received in Ghor, Laghman, Nangarhar and Nuristan Provinces, with reports of intra-insurgent clashes in Laghman, Logar and Wardak Provinces.

16. The United Nations continued to monitor security-related events relevant to the work, mobility and safety of civilian actors and with the potential to affect the delivery of mandated activities and programmes. The United Nations and its implementing partners were direct and collateral targets in attacks on convoys in Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Kandahar and Wardak Provinces during the reporting period. On 29 August, a United Nations national staff member was injured when an

improvised explosive device detonated against a United Nations vehicle in the Kaldar district of Balkh Province, although it has not been determined whether the vehicle was targeted. In Badghis, Baghlan, Farah, Herat and Kunar Provinces, national staff were abducted, but released unharmed after the intervention of elders. Threats against national staff were made in Nangarhar Province, while transport facilities used by United Nations personnel were attacked in the cities of Kabul and Kandahar.

17. Overall, recorded security incidents have continued at a lower level than in 2011, with the figures being more comparable to 2010 levels. From 1 May to 31 July, the traditional summer fighting season, 5,190 incidents were recorded, representing a 30 per cent decrease compared to the same period in 2011 (7,470 incidents). This is assessed to be the result of several trends, including interdiction by Afghan and international security forces of insurgents, arms shipments and funding, together with the redeployment of international forces, reducing the likelihood of direct armed clashes. Of all incidents from 1 May to 31 July, 69 per cent took place in the south, south-east and east, mostly in Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar and Nangarhar Provinces.

18. Insurgents have remained focused on infiltrating routes from the south-eastern and eastern provinces towards Kabul. Kunar, Laghman, Logar and Nangarhar Provinces notably recorded an increase in security incidents between 1 May and 31 July, compared to the same period in 2011. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices constituted the vast majority of events. Suicide attacks slightly decreased, with 32 taking place between 1 May and 31 July, compared to 37 in 2011. In July, the sustained efforts by insurgents notwithstanding, five suicide attacks were recorded, compared to nine in 2011. This reduction was due in part to Afghan and international security forces seizing large amounts of explosives and suicide devices and dismantling suicide attack cells. Security agencies reported that, in July, five planned attacks were thwarted in the cities of Herat, Kabul, Kandahar and Kunduz and that an imminent threat in Kabul was prevented by the interdiction on 2 August of a suicide cell.

19. The complexity and intensity of such planned or executed attacks have been increasing. On 21 June, four attackers armed with light and heavy weaponry launched a 12-hour siege on a lakeside restaurant on the outskirts of Kabul, killing 21 Afghan civilians and 3 Afghan police officers and injuring 7 other civilians. The Taliban, while claiming responsibility, sought to excuse the targeting of a civilian location and population by stating that the restaurant was the site of un-Islamic behaviour.

20. The surge target strength of 157,000 Afghan national police officers and 195,000 Afghan national army personnel by the end of 2012 is ahead of schedule. An estimated 149,000 police officers and 185,000 army personnel were in place by the end of July. To better emphasize the appropriate law enforcement role of the police, the Police-e-Mardumi (Democratic Policing) secretariat — launched by the Ministry of the Interior in April to coordinate community policing initiatives and liaise with civil society so as to increase police accountability and responsiveness — has overseen the creation of dedicated community policing units in eight provinces. Work is now focused on developing a ministerial strategy, curriculum and training programme. Efforts to strengthen the recruitment and capacity of female police officers, critical in ensuring access to justice for women and children, have,

however, lagged behind. UNAMA continues to play an active role in coordinating international resources to assist the Ministry in these efforts and is supporting the involvement of civil society in the reforms. The replacement of private security companies by the Afghan Public Protection Force has seen slow progress, with both the Deputy Minister of the Interior responsible for the project and the Chief Executive Officer replaced during the reporting period.

21. The Afghan local police programme continued to expand. By mid-August, more than 16,266 personnel were operating at 71 validated sites. While these local security forces have contributed to stability in several areas, concerns remain about issues of impunity, vetting, lack of clear command and control, and the potential re-emergence of ethnically or politically biased militias. UNAMA has expressed concern about the appointment of alleged human rights abusers to positions of responsibility and about several reports of abuse involving local police officers. A local police commander from Kunduz was arrested on 23 June following allegations that he had held and repeatedly raped an 18-year-old woman over a period of five days.

22. According to local officials, at least nine Pashtun tribesmen were killed early in August in the southern Province of Uruzgan. The killing is widely believed to have been perpetrated by individuals from the Hazara community who presented themselves as officers of a local defence initiative. This incident followed the deaths of two members of the Hazara community, apparently at the hands of the Taliban. Local government officials are concerned about the spectre of a cycle of ethnically motivated violence and threats by some in the Pashtun community to turn their weapons against the Government if justice is not done.

23. There have been continuing reports of defections from various Afghan security bodies. This includes 17 members of the local police in the north-western Province of Badghis understood to have joined the Taliban on 24 June and a further 93 who switched sides on 3 July. The killing or injuring of colleagues and international counterparts by persons in Afghan uniform is a worrying development affecting trust during a security transition based on close coordination between Afghans and their foreign mentors. Incidents included, on 17 August, a local police recruit, understood to be a former insurgent, opening fire and killing two ISAF personnel on his first day of training in the western Province of Farah. Intra-Afghan incidents included an Afghan policeman killing 10 of his colleagues on 11 August in the south-eastern Province of Nimroz.

C. Regional cooperation

24. Progress was made in regional cooperation and confidence-building in a wide range of areas at the "Heart of Asia" Ministerial Conference, held on 14 June in Kabul, which was the first ministerial-level follow-up meeting to the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan. Attendees included high-level delegations from 14 Heart of Asia nations, 14 supporting countries and 11 regional and international organizations. Among other elements, participants decided to proceed with the implementation of seven priority confidence-building measures: disaster management, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, cooperation between chambers of commerce, commercial

opportunities, regional infrastructure and educatio... The measures are currently being prepared, developed and im emented.

25. Seeking to build on the Istanbul Process, and ahead of the Tokyo Conference, a summit on investment in Afghanistan was held in New Delhi on 24 June, hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industry. Both the Governments of Afghanistan and India were represented by key ministers, with more than 500 participants from 33 countries and some 150 Indian and 85 Afghan companies demonstrating their commitment to assisting Afghanistan and its economic development.

26. On 7 July, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan chaired a meeting of senior officials at which the participants laid the groundwork for an ambassadorial-level meeting in Kabul, held on 23 July, at which countries taking the lead on the various confidence-building measures agreed to designate focal points expeditiously and work with regional technical groups to draft implementation plans. Support by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes was confirmed. On 3 September, the regional technical group on counter-terrorism met in Ankara, with the Governments of Afghanistan, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates taking the lead.

27. On 19 July, the President of Afghanistan held a meeting in Kabul with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Raja Pervez Ashraf and Hina Rabbani Khar. The Pakistani delegation reaffirmed its support for the peace process and pledged to step up efforts to facilitate direct intra-Afghan contacts and negotiations. On 3 July, in a telephone call with her Pakistani counterpart, the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Hillary Rodham Clinton, expressed regret for the tragic incident in November 2011 in which 24 Pakistani troops had been killed. On the same day, Pakistan announced the reopening of North Atlantic Treaty Organization supply routes into Afghanistan.

28. The assassination, on 21 July, of the head of State security in Kuhistoni Badakhshon Province, Tajikistan, and the subsequent army operations in that country have had a cross-border impact on Badakhshan Province in northern Afghanistan. The reported presence of Tajik extremist groups on the Afghan side led to fears that they would seek to exploit the instability. On 26 July, the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, and the Minister of the Interior of Afghanistan met to discuss joint border security. Tajikistan closed its border during the military operations, affecting the movement of Afghans living in the mountainous Badakhshan region. UNAMA liaised throughout the events with Afghan and Tajik provincial and consular officials, including with regard to humanitarian access.

29. My Special Representative conducted official visits to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation during the reporting period. At a meeting on 28 June in Astana, the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, reaffirmed his Government's proactive support for regional cooperation, including in the framework of the Istanbul Process. At meetings in Moscow from 13 to 15 August, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, and other senior officials conveyed strong Russian concerns regarding drug production and trafficking. Regional dynamics were the focus of the meetings in Bishkek from 5 to 7 September.

III. Human rights

30. A 4 per cent decrease in civilian casualties was recorded between 1 May and 31 July compared to the same period in 2011. UNAMA documented 2,378 civilian casualties (930 people killed and 1,448 injured) over the three-month period, compared to 2,466 civilian casualties (1,029 people killed and 1,437 injured) in 2011. In particular, there has been a significant reduction in civilian casualties resulting from suicide attacks and ground engagements between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements. Insurgents bore responsibility for 85 per cent of civilian casualties, up from 78 per cent for the same period in 2011, and pro-Government forces for 7 per cent, down from 12 per cent in 2011. Some 9 per cent of civilian casualties could not be attributed to any party.

31. A message was sent, allegedly by Mullah Omar, to mark Eid al-Fitr, the end of the holy month of Ramadan, in which he urged Taliban fighters not to harm civilians, terming it a religious duty. Similarly, the leader of the Hizb-i Islami faction, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, made a public statement for the occasion in which he emphasized the protection of civilians. Contrary to such rhetoric, attacks continued in locations frequented by ordinary citizens and the targeted killings of civilians increased. During Ramadan, there were at least five attacks targeting imams in mosques. The deadliest day to date in 2012 was 14 August, with violent incidents recorded throughout the country, several targeting shoppers, resulting in more than 200 civilians being killed or injured. In an incident reported on 27 August, 17 civilians, including 2 women, were reportedly killed in Helmand Province in gruesome circumstances, several of them beheaded. UNAMA issued a statement in which it strongly condemned the reprehensible act and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. On 1 September, a double suicide attack in Sayedabad, Wardak Province, killed at least eight civilians. Following an attack by a lone suicide bomber, an extremely large truck bomb exploded, levelling the district administrative centre and damaging surrounding buildings.

32. Between 1 May and 31 July, the targeted killings of civilians, including Government officials and workers, community elders and religious actors, also rose, leaving 231 people dead and 139 injured. This figure represents an 88 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2011, when 162 people were killed and 35 injured. The threefold increase in injuries may in part be attributed to the increased use of improvised explosive devices in targeted killings. On 13 July, the head of the Department of Women's Affairs in Laghman Province, Hanifa Safi, was killed by a remote-controlled explosive device and members of her family injured. A suicide attack on 14 July on a wedding party in the northern Province of Samangan targeted a local parliamentarian and strongman, Ahmad Khan Samangani, also killing the regional police commander, the provincial head of the National Directorate of Security and 23 other civilians. No insurgent group has claimed responsibility, with competing theories about the perpetrator and motives amid complex inter-factional and intra-factional tensions. On the pro-Government side, civilian deaths and injuries caused by air strikes, night raids and other military operations decreased significantly. Air raids continued to cause more civilian casualties than any other tactic used by pro-Government forces.

33. Harmful traditional practices, particularly affecting women and girls, remain endemic. Following significant remonstrations by local women's groups and civil society at large, on 24 June, the Minister of Justice apologized for comments in

which he had referred to women's shelters as sites of immorality. UNAMA reiterated its support for such shelters, which provide critical support for vulnerable Afghan women and girls. UNAMA has expressed concerns over continuing extrajudicial and honour killings of women in Afghanistan. Early in July, the filmed public execution by the Taliban of a 22-year-old woman over allegations of adultery in Parwan Province triggered a global outcry. Civil society groups underscored fears that the international military drawdown could adversely affect gains made by Afghan women during the past decade. In a statement issued on 24 July, a consortium of groups called for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

34. In line with activist lobbying by women's civil society groups, several officials were prosecuted for violence against women, including a prison director in Logar Province, who was convicted of raping a 15-year-old girl in 2010 and sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment. On 17 and 18 July, the N-Peace Network, a platform to support the leadership of women in building peace, was launched in Kabul. Facilitated by the United Nations, 35 women leaders came together and agreed that the peace process and access to justice were immediate priorities for the N-Peace action plan for 2012-2013.

35. On 27 June, the media watchdog (Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan) and a number of journalists' associations and unions, with the support of UNAMA, convened media representatives from around the country to discuss draft amendments to the Mass Media Act. There is concern that the proposals being developed by the Ministry of Information and Culture risk curtailing freedom of speech and increasing Government control of the media. The presidential decree of 27 July also contains language that can potentially restrict the right to receive and impart information, with the media ordered to "refrain from anti-State propaganda and anything that may lead to negative motivations or misguiding youth".

IV. Implementation of the Kabul process and aid coherence

36. On 26 June, in the lead-up to the Tokyo Conference, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, co-chaired by the Government of Afghanistan and UNAMA, met and endorsed the Government's paper entitled "Towards self-reliance — strategic vision for the transformation decade" and five national priority programmes. The paper sets out a road map for Afghanistan to consolidate a fully functioning, sustainable State in the service of its people. It focuses on progressively reducing dependence on foreign assistance and commits the Government to achieving human development and the Millennium Development Goals.

37. The Tokyo Declaration and the Tokyo Framework, adopted at the Conference, focused Government commitments on five key areas: democracy and equitable elections; rule of law and human rights, including a particular focus on women's rights; public finance and commercial banking; budget execution and subnational governance; and inclusive and sustained growth. Similarly, the international community reaffirmed its commitment to channelling 50 per cent of its development assistance through the national budget of the Government of Afghanistan, aligning 80 per cent of aid with national priority programmes and to finalizing and endorsing, through the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, the Government's aid management policy by December 2012.

38. At a donor meeting held on 31 July in Kabul, the Ministry of Finance presented a concept paper on implementing the Tokyo Framework. This was welcomed by the international community as a positive step in setting the post-Tokyo agenda with a clear focus on mutual accountability. The paper will be further developed to include a focus on agreeing upon appropriate aid architecture, building on the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, for sustained policy dialogue. To date, 16 national priority programmes have been endorsed by the Board, demonstrating consensus among the Government of Afghanistan and its international partners on policy orientation in priority sectors. Work will intensify on the final six programmes, with the aim of their endorsement by the Board in October.

39. Civil society played a strong and constructive role in the discussions leading up to, and at, the Tokyo Conference. A platform of 25 local organizations, including all major umbrella organizations, several women's groups, a major trade union and a youth organization, formed a civil society joint working group. This group elected Afghan civil society delegates to be sent to Tokyo, liaised with the Japanese non-governmental organizations steering committee and drafted a position paper in which it was emphasized that security, accountability and good governance were essential to sustainable development and that civil society actors must play a constructive role in a self-reliant Afghanistan.

40. On 29 June, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund completed the first review of Afghanistan's economic performance under the extended credit facility arrangements. Progress on reform objectives was noted. On the Kabul Bank issue (where concerns over the soundness of the Bank led to a significant withdrawal of its deposits in 2010 and its eventual audit and placement under receivership), the Afghan authorities reported some cash recoveries. No shareholder has, however, paid in full and cases have been referred to a special tribunal and the Financial Disputes Resolution Commission.

V. Governance and rule of law

41. Before the Tokyo Conference, UNAMA facilitated consultative meetings between donors to help to finalize the national priority programme on local governance, which was endorsed on 26 June. Support for subnational governance will become increasingly important as provincial reconstruction teams cease work. UNAMA has been assisting the Government to develop and coordinate implementation plans and to finalize and endorse the programmes on accountability and transparency and on effective and efficient governance.

42. In an important development for institutional efforts to tackle corruption, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee reached its full complement of five members in July. International members visited Afghanistan from 6 to 20 July as part of the sixth mission of the Committee, which included consultations with Government officials and representatives of the international community and civil society. The Committee approved 17 additional benchmarks and recommendations, bringing the totals to 73 and 74, respectively. Recommended measures included strengthening the oversight role of civil society, greater oversight of border control, a public awareness campaign focused on religious strictures against corrupt practices, adherence to restrictions on

subcontracting and the highlighting of specific organizations and projects where audits were recommended.

43. Although efforts continued to finalize the national priority programme on law and justice for all, a revised draft is not expected to be ready for endorsement by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in October. While recognizing that the complexity of the justice sector makes the development of such a programme particularly difficult, it is of concern that, two years after the Kabul Conference, there is to date no endorsed programme in this crucial area. In the meantime, UNAMA has been working with donors to provide the Government with an overview of expected support to the justice programme. Steady progress is being made on legislative reform of the justice sector. The newly drafted Criminal Procedure Code was presented to the National Assembly on 30 June and is expected to be placed on the legislative agenda soon. The period also saw the creation of several working groups to revise the Penal Code. Appointments of a new Chief Justice and one member of the Supreme Court, whose terms expired two years ago, are pending.

44. The transfer of detainees from the Parwan detention facility, which is under the control of the United States military, to the custody of the Afghan authorities continues under the memorandum of understanding of March 2012 between the two Governments. Up to 100 juveniles were transferred to the Kabul Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre, highlighting concerns about overcrowding and the security risks that may arise by placing high-risk juveniles in a facility not intended to house high-level security detainees. UNAMA has emphasized to the Government the need to separate this group from other juveniles under detention and to ensure that additional security measures are provided.

VI. Development and humanitarian assistance

45. In June 2012, the Minister of Public Health of Afghanistan joined his counterparts around the world in signing a pledge to support ending preventable child deaths, consistent with the Secretary-General's Every Woman Every Child initiative. The pledge will help to sharpen the Afghan national plan for child survival, monitor results and focus greater attention on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children. On 27 June, the Central Statistics Organization released the multiple indicator cluster survey for 2010-2011. Conducted with United Nations support, the survey showed that almost 1 million children under 5 years of age were acutely malnourished. Significant progress was seen in most indicators relating to women and children when compared to the previous survey, carried out in 2003. A total of 57 per cent of the population enjoyed improved access to drinking water, and 63 per cent of boys and 46 per cent of girls of primary education age were attending school. Major disparities remained apparent, however, in access: health personnel attended 74 per cent of women who gave birth in towns in 2008-2009, while the rate dropped to 30.5 per cent for those in rural areas. A woman's level of education was the most reliable predictor of nearly all indicators: for example, 45 per cent of women with secondary or higher education received antenatal care, compared to 11.8 per cent of uneducated women.

46. The operationalization of a nutrition action framework to tackle maternal and child undernutrition was backed by the Second Vice-President, Karim Khalili, who will oversee its implementation. Developed by the ministries of education, public

health, commerce, agriculture and rural rehabilitation, with the support of the United Nations and the World Bank, it aims at preventing stunting, with a focus on the 1,000 days following conception. On 23 and 24 July, poliomyelitis was the subject of a meeting between Afghan and Pakistani officials in Kabul. According to data from August, there have been 17 confirmed cases of poliomyelitis in Afghanistan in 2012, most of which were recorded in Helmand, Kandahar and Kunar Provinces. At the meeting, hosted by the Minister of Public Health of Afghanistan, the participants outlined a joint plan to strengthen cross-border coordination, including the immunization of children in insecure border areas and the vaccination of populations moving between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

47. Together with the ministries of refugees and repatriation, rural development, agriculture and labour and social welfare, the United Nations is finalizing a joint voluntary return and reintegration programme for refugees, which will implement the Afghan component of the May 2012 solutions strategy for Afghan refugees to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host countries. Managed by the Government, it will pursue sustainable reintegration through a community-based approach within the national priority programme framework. It aims to improve access to basic services, livelihood opportunities, protection and institutional capacity-building over a four-year period in 48 high-return areas.

48. The importance of sustainable return and reintegration of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons was highlighted during a high-level event sponsored by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the margins of the Tokyo Conference and in the Tokyo Declaration. Similarly, at the "Heart of Asia" Ministerial Conference, participants recommended according priority to the implementation of a confidence-building measure on refugees in the next phase of the Istanbul Process.

49. As at 30 June, some 425,000 persons (around 65,000 families) had been displaced by conflict, nearly one quarter of whom had been newly displaced in 2012 (a 14 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2011). Against this backdrop of rising internal displacement, the Government requested the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation to develop a national policy to tackle the causes of displacement, to strengthen prevention, protection and assistance and to develop durable solutions. To support this comprehensive approach, and to begin raising the awareness of major stakeholders, including provincial authorities and representatives of the displaced, a national consultative workshop was held on 14 and 15 July. It was attended by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, during his mission to Afghanistan, to raise political support for the new policy. On 29 August, my Deputy Special Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator visited Jalalabad to discuss, in particular, the displacement of hundreds of families resulting from recent security events in Kunar Province.

50. Natural disasters, such as flooding, earthquakes, avalanches, extreme weather, landslides and mudflows, continued to affect already vulnerable segments of the Afghan population. From 1 June to 31 July, the United Nations recorded 58 natural disaster events in 57 districts, affecting 31,783 individuals, causing 116 deaths and destroying 2,046 homes. In welcome news, following the 2011 drought, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock estimates that national cereal production

will reach 6.3 million tons in 2012, which would be the second-largest harvest in 35 years and represent an increase of 42 per cent compared to the harvest of 2011.

VII. Counter-narcotics

51. On 26 June, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board endorsed the Counter-Narcotics Monitoring Mechanism, to be co-chaired by the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The mechanism will, as its first priority, map all counter-narcotics activities within existing national priority programmes and note other activities under the programmes that are relevant to counter-narcotics outcomes. The Ministry will also now be represented at meetings of the Board and its Standing Committee and in relevant Kabul Process forums. The Mechanism's work and decisions will be informed by the revised national drug control strategy and by existing approaches of the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics, including with regard to alternative livelihoods, drug demand reduction, law enforcement, public awareness and institution-building.

52. On 20 June, the Ministry marked the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking with a ceremony at Amani High School in Kabul attended by high-level national and international stakeholders. The Minister of Counter-Narcotics, Zarar Ahmad Moqbel Osmani, emphasized that there was a need for increased control over precursor chemicals and enhanced regional and international efforts. The Government-led eradication force is estimated to have removed 10,282 hectares of poppy in 2012 (not including figures from Badakhshan, where quality checks are continuing), a figure that is already a 170 per cent increase compared to that for 2011 (3,810 hectares).

53. On 27 June in New York, UNODC and the Government of Afghanistan organized a briefing and exchange session on regional cooperation on counter-narcotics, aimed at intensifying support for the Governments of Afghanistan and its neighbours to translate agreed regional cooperation objectives into specific actions. Presided over by the Executive Director of UNODC, the participants included the Minister of Counter-Narcotics and the head of the Drug Control Agency of Tajikistan. Discussion included strengthening the operational aspects of existing efforts such as the Triangular Initiative between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan and other regional mechanisms.

VIII. Mission support

54. UNAMA continued to reconfigure the Mission to best meet its mandate in the current and anticipated political, security and financial environment, guided by the outcomes of the comprehensive review conducted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1974 (2011), the subsequent renewal of the mandate by the Council in its resolution 2041 (2012) and funding levels approved for special political missions by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/248. The substantial reductions to its 2013 budget, currently expected to be in the range of between 18 and 19 per cent, required to meet the overall funding levels approved by the General Assembly for the biennium 2012-2013, added urgency and clear financial parameters to the debate. Extensive consultations were conducted within the Mission and with the United Nations country team, given the implications for the United Nations system

as a whole. A reduced footprint and fewer resources will necessarily affect operational capacity and underline the need to focus on core strategic goals. A programme criticality exercise is being undertaken by the United Nations system in Afghanistan to review and define essential activities of the Mission and the United Nations country team, in addition to effective, flexible and secure modalities to implement their respective mandates.

55. Key operational elements of the Mission's configuration include the closure of nine provincial offices, a reduction of approximately 25 per cent of the authorized international and national staff (629 positions) and an adjustment to the Mission's logistical support, including a reduction in the number of air assets from 10 to 7. The currently authorized number of military and police advisers has also been revised downwards. Provincial offices in Badghis, Ghor, Nimroz and Zabul Provinces ceased operation during the reporting period, and those in Daykundi, Kunar, Sari Pul, Takhar and Uruzgan Provinces will be closed by the end of 2012. Some premises will be taken over by agencies, funds and programmes, as was the case in Ghor Province. National reach remains at the core of the Mission's mandated activities, but will now be carried out more flexibly, with regional offices functioning as hubs with logistical and substantive capacity to cover adjacent provinces, wherever possible.

56. Previously planned investments in core infrastructure, where essential to ensure operational standards for staff safety and security, have proceeded. Construction work is progressing on the offices in Balkh and Bamyan Provinces, which are expected to be functional by October. The only major new infrastructural investment envisaged is linked to the relocation, for security reasons, of the office in Kunduz from the current compound. UNAMA will continue to relocate functions to Kuwait. In this regard, the establishment of an integrated back office with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq continues to move forward with the integration of finance and human resources units as part of the initial phase.

57. The proposed organizational reconfiguration also includes the creation of a civil affairs unit, drawing together the governance and development coherence units of the Mission. Furthermore, the Child Protection Unit will be merged with the Human Rights Unit, while maintaining all required reporting lines to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. UNAMA and UNDP will step up collaboration in the justice sector, in line with the joint Department of Peacekeeping Operations-UNDP guidance on rule of law, with greater strategic alignment and enhanced collaboration in provincial activities. The UNAMA training centre will continue to partner with local and regional institutions to build national capacity and to concentrate efforts on bringing international consultants into the Mission.

IX. Observations

58. The Tokyo Conference further consolidated the commitments of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to an enduring partnership. Mutual obligations outlined in Bonn, Germany, at the United Nations talks on Afghanistan, in December 2001, and reiterated during the discussions on Afghanistan at the summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization held in Chicago, United States, in May 2012, are now complemented by the Tokyo

Framework. I congratulate the Government on its excellent preparation of the event and its drive to develop ways to implement its outcomes; and I welcome the generous pledges by international partners to provide more than $16 billion of financial aid until 2015 and to sustain support until 2017 at, or near, the levels of the past decade. The finalization of outstanding programmes, agreement on a reinvigorated Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board architecture and the adoption of the aid management policy now require sustained attention. The operationalization of these commitments must focus on realizing the ultimate goal: an irreversible path to self-reliance, legitimate Government structures, service delivery and stability.

59. Demonstrable progress on the indicators in the Tokyo Framework is essential. Properly sequenced national priority programmes must now evolve into vehicles for tangible development results. Mainstreaming counter-narcotics efforts through the endorsement of the Monitoring Mechanism, the Tokyo Conference outcomes and the presidential decree of 27 July are all positive steps in recognizing the cross-cutting nature of this issue. In tackling corruption, greater official support is needed for the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee for it to fulfil its mandate, while progress on repayments and prosecutions relating to the failed Kabul Bank are required. In turn, the international community, including the United Nations family, must provide predictable assistance in ways that strengthen national ownership and capacity.

60. As donors repeatedly stressed in Tokyo, the protection and promotion of gains in human rights and, especially, women's rights are essential. In this regard, the implementation of the Elimination of Violence against Women Act and the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan will be key indicators. As highlighted in the multiple indicator cluster survey, commitment to women's empowerment is ultimately an investment in development outcomes.

61. The importance of the next round of elections to the political transition was also a central focus in Tokyo. It must be a fair contest, free of internal and external interference, in which Afghans throughout the country are able to register and cast their vote. Unhindered possibilities for vigorous debate among political parties and civil society, with the media free to report, are essential aspects of political pluralism. The intense national and international attention needs to be harnessed, with the lead time used to agree on and consolidate credible and independent institutions, frameworks and processes. Strong leadership by the Independent Election Commission is critical to donor confidence and, most importantly, to the credibility of the process. The current UNDP ELECT II project provides capacity-building and technical assistance. The United Nations stands ready to undertake, upon request from the Afghan authorities, a needs assessment mission to determine the potential operationalization of election support.

62. Improvements in the security situation have been registered against the record high incident levels of 2011. These gains have not, however, generated public perceptions of greater security and do not reflect improvements to the institutional structures required for longer-term stability. Little has changed in the underlying dynamics to mitigate a deep-seated cycle of conflict. Furthermore, a diminished international presence will have a significant financial impact in many areas that, at least in the short term, may even exacerbate predatory behaviour, with a reduced flow of money encouraging criminality. The Government and international community need to work together to mitigate security and humanitarian risks

resulting from economic shrinkage. In close coordination with major stakeholders and within the bounds of its limited resources, the United Nations will seek to assist Afghans in filling the gaps that may arise as the transition accelerates.

63. The security transition to date has proceeded as planned and expected. To avoid a potential protracted conflict, or increased instability and fragmentation, appreciation appears to be growing among key stakeholders of the urgent need to explore an intra-Afghan accommodation. Signs are emerging of an interest in dialogue, with appropriate interlocutors, from some Taliban elements. Providing good offices in support of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process remains a core priority of UNAMA. I support greater alignment of the sanction regime under resolution 1988 (2011) with Afghan peace and reconciliation frameworks. Specifically, the process for travel ban exemptions could be a useful tool for furthering peace efforts. Religious actors and institutions will also play a critical role in furthering reconciliation and the promotion of peace, and UNAMA is continuing to enhance its outreach capacity and activities in this area.

64. Although the reduction in civilian casualties is welcome, gains are fragile and continue to represent a significant human tragedy. The vast majority of civilian casualties stems from the use by anti-Government elements of pressure-plate improvised explosive devices, suicide attacks and targeted killings of civilians, including men and women actively pursuing peace and reconciliation. Perpetrators, organizers and internal and external sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism must understand that they can eventually be brought to justice for their actions in violation of international law and relevant Security Council resolutions. I particularly call upon anti-Government elements to allow humanitarian organizations access to communities and to express public commitment in support of vaccination campaigns.

65. Some effective steps taken by pro-Government forces to reduce civilian casualties should be recognized. As Afghan security forces assume increasing responsibility, establishing a civilian casualty mitigation team in the Afghan army to ensure timely investigations and accurate incident tracking will be an important continuation of such efforts. Accountability is vital for building public confidence in the Afghan forces that have the responsibility to protect the population and for reinforcing the rule of law. Clear lines of command and control are essential, and UNAMA continues to engage stakeholders over concerns about the Afghan local police, in particular.

66. Given the depth of humanitarian needs in Afghanistan, following the midyear review, the consolidated appeals process increased to $448 million to address the life-saving needs of approximately 8.8 million people. It is worrying that, as at 1 August, funding stood at 33.5 per cent, less than half the amount that was available during the same period in 2011.

67. The Istanbul Process has reinvigorated and strengthened the coherence of regional support, helping to redefine regional assistance to Afghanistan based on mutual self-interest, rather than as a charitable act. The level of engagement by Heart of Asia countries and its supporters has outpaced initial expectations, owing to the strong multilateral character of the process, with regional participation, Afghan leadership and international support. I particularly thank those neighbouring countries and participant nations that have committed themselves to taking the lead

on the various confidence-building measures agreed in the framework of the Istanbul Process.

68. The reconfiguration of UNAMA amid a substantial decrease in resources will necessarily affect operational capacity and mandate implementation. In the light of the expectations of the Government of Afghanistan, civil society and Member States surrounding the post-2014 role and responsibilities of the Mission and the wider United Nations system, constructive debate is required. Downsizing is in no way a prelude to exit. The United Nations has been a strong partner of Afghanistan for 60 years and its commitment to a peaceful and secure future for the nation and its people remains undiminished.

69. I should like, once again, to express my gratitude to all national and international United Nations staff members in Afghanistan, and, in particular, to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, for their continuing efforts and dedication, the challenging circumstances notwithstanding, to support the people of Afghanistan.

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Report of the Secretary-General on the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), by which the Council requested me to submit reports every 90 days on the implementation of that resolution, including on the restoration and respect of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, as well as on the humanitarian situation in the country. The present report covers major developments since my last oral report of 5 June 2012 and my last regular report of 17 July 2012 on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) (S/2012/554).

II. Restoration and respect of constitutional order

A. Political situation

1. Overview of the political situation in the country

2. The political situation in Guinea-Bissau continued to be characterized by deep divisions, particularly among political and civil society actors, with respect to the transitional arrangements and how to achieve full restoration of constitutional order in the country following the 12 April 2012 military coup. While some political actors, including the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), the largest party in Parliament, continued to reject the Transitional Government as the legitimate governing authority, others such as the Party for Social Renewal (PRS) fully acknowledged the legitimacy of the current transitional arrangements. In this context, national stakeholders remained deadlocked and were yet to reach a unified position on the way out of the political crisis.

3. These opposing positions have negatively impacted the functioning of the National Assembly. Although the Assembly's fourth ordinary session opened on 29 June, disagreements over the items to be included on the agenda prevented parliamentarians from pursuing their deliberations. The request of PAIGC for the election of a new Speaker and a new First Deputy Speaker to be included on the agenda was opposed by the interim Speaker, Ibraima Sory Djaló, on the basis that such elections would be contingent upon the resignation of the incumbents, respectively the deposed interim President of the Republic and the current

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Transitional President. The ensuing impasse led to the premature adjournment of the session on 6 July.

4. On 20 July, PAIGC published its fourth memorandum related to its position on the transition, which it also submitted to the Transitional President, Serifo Nhamadjo, the Armed Forces Chief of General Staff, General António Indjai, and international partners. In its position paper, PAIGC highlighted the need for the impasse in the National Assembly to be resolved and for an inclusive transitional government to be formed. It also criticized the Transitional Government for not issuing a government programme or disseminating information on how it intended to advance the transitional process. In response, on 2 August, the Transitional Prime Minister, Rui Duarte de Barros, made public the transitional government programme. The programme focuses on four key priorities, namely the holding of general elections; the promotion of justice and the fight against impunity; the fight against organized crime and corruption; and reforms in the defence and security sectors. However, the programme does not provide a timeline for the implementation of these priorities.

5. On 8 August, Transitional President Nhamadjo met with representatives of PAIGC to discuss the party's latest position paper. Shortly thereafter, PAIGC met with parliamentary parties, including PRS, and non-parliamentary parties to discuss, inter alia, the formation of an inclusive government and proposals to break the deadlock in the National Assembly. No consensus could be reached during those discussions. With respect to the PAIGC proposal to form a new government, PRS, which is the main opposition party in Parliament, argued that the current Transitional Government was already inclusive as it contained representatives of all political parties, including PAIGC. PRS also asserted that the demands of PAIGC to lead a new transitional government did not take account of the new balance of power resulting from the 12 April coup d'état. On 28 August, in an encounter with the press, the Transitional President underscored the need for all political forces in the country to participate in the transition. PAIGC has continued its démarches with the Transitional President and other parties on a proposal to review the transitional arrangements and ensure a more inclusive process.

6. Issues related to impunity and justice remained on the national agenda during the reporting period. On 19 July, the Council of Ministers of the Transitional Government discussed the presumed killing of PAIGC parliamentarian Roberto Cachéu, who has been missing since 26 December 2011. Seven officers of the Ministry of the Interior were detained for questioning in relation to the presumed killing on 17 July. Two were released on 19 July. On 20 July, the Office of the Public Prosecutor launched an inquiry into the case. The remaining five detainees were released on 17 August. On 5 September, the Prosecutor General informed UNIOGBIS that investigations into reports of Mr. Cachéu's alleged killing were inconclusive and that the Transitional Government was continuing to investigate his whereabouts. On 12 August, at a meeting with the President of the National Human Rights Commission, the Minister of Justice of the Transitional Government stated that all political assassinations committed in Guinea-Bissau since 2009 would be tried by the end of the transition in May 2013.

7. In a presidential decree issued on 24 August, the Transitional President dismissed the Prosecutor General, Edmundo Mendes, and appointed Abdú Mané, a former head of the Bar Association, as the new Prosecutor General. While some

observers pointed to Mr. Mané's competence and professionalism, others expressed reservations about his impartiality given his former position as legal representative of the families of some of the victims of the 2009 political assassinations. At his swearing-in ceremony on 27 August, the Transitional President stated that the Prosecutor General should "without hate or vengeance bring to justice all those who need to be held accountable without exception". During a meeting with UNIOGBIS on 5 September to review the issue of impunity, the new Prosecutor General called for international technical support to fight impunity in Guinea-Bissau.

8. Although the travel ban imposed by the "Military Command" on 9 May 2012 against 57 individuals, including members of the ousted Government and PAIGC, was lifted on 4 June, concerns remained over the continued infringement of fundamental human rights and freedoms in the country. On 7 July, a consortium of five leading national non-governmental organizations issued a communiqué drawing attention to the continued ban on marches and to the intimidation of political and civil society critics of the transition. The former interim President, Raimundo Pereira, the former Prime Minister, Carlos Gomes Júnior, and the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Djaló Pires, continued to reside abroad as they feared for their security. On 19 July, in an interview with the Portuguese news agency Lusa, the Transitional President stated that they could participate in the forthcoming elections unless there were legal impediments rendering them ineligible. He also indicated that security conditions were in place for their return to Guinea-Bissau. However, in a defiant statement given to the armed forces on 22 August, the Armed Forces Chief of General Staff warned that a possible electoral victory of Mr. Gomes Júnior would not bode well for the armed forces and that the military would not remain with their "arms crossed" if the deposed Prime Minister were to win the elections.

9. Since it took office in May 2012, the Council of Ministers of the Transitional Government has made changes at director level in most ministries, State corporations, institutions and agencies, as well as in local government structures. These changes in Guinea-Bissau's public administration were made despite the assurances by the Transitional Government that it was committed to continuing the State administrative reform policy of the ousted Government. In a note verbale dated 31 July, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Transitional Government informed UNIOGBIS of the appointment of Manuel Maria Monteiro Santos, the current Ambassador to Angola, as the new Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations. On 9 August, the Transitional President issued decrees dismissing Guinea-Bissau's ambassadors to Belgium, China, France, Portugal and the United Nations in New York and appointing Mr. Monteiro Santos as the new Permanent Representative in New York.

2. Efforts by national, regional and international stakeholders towards the restoration and respect of constitutional order

10. During the reporting period, national stakeholders launched several initiatives aimed at the full restoration of constitutional order in the country. On 31 July, the União para a Mudança (UM), a non-parliamentary party, issued a document entitled "Proposal for a solution to the problems that characterize the current political moment in Guinea-Bissau", which advised the Transitional President to hold hearings of political parties in order to form a broad-based government and to facilitate dialogue between PAIGC and PRS. UM also called for the election of a new President and a new first Vice President of the National Assembly in

accordance with the body's procedures. On 17 August, a delegation of UM presented the document to UNIOGBIS and called for the support of the international community for the transitional and electoral processes.

11. Civil society organizations were also active in advocating for progress in restoring constitutional rule in the country. On 13 August, on the occasion of its twenty-first anniversary, the Human Rights League of Guinea-Bissau issued a statement in which it highlighted the urgent need to find a solution to the political crisis based on democracy and the rule of law. The League also stated that peace and national reconciliation would not be achieved as long as impunity persisted in the country. On 30 August, the spokesperson for the Civil Society Movement for Peace, Democracy and Development informed the press about his organization's meetings with political actors and international partners which had highlighted the need to overcome the deadlock in Parliament and facilitate its functioning, as well as the need to take into account the views of PAIGC in the transitional process.

12. In an attempt to engage the international community, the Transitional Government launched a fortnightly forum with international partners on 12 July to discuss issues related to the transitional process. During the 2 August meeting of the forum, the Minister of Finance appealed to international partners to work with the Transitional Government and resume their cooperation with Guinea-Bissau.

13. Meanwhile, my Special Representative continued his consultations with national stakeholders on the need for an inclusive nationally led dialogue aimed at creating a common understanding of the conditions for a successful transition. In this context, from 18 June to the first week of July, he met with parliamentary parties, the Frente Nacional Anti-Golpe (FRENAGOLPE) and representatives of civil society, including religious leaders. National stakeholders welcomed this concept of dialogue, and consultations on its modalities were ongoing.

14. Guinea-Bissau's international partners, particularly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), continued to be divided over the transitional process. At its forty-first ordinary session, held in Yamoussoukro on 28 and 29 June 2012, the Authority of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS endorsed the Guinea-Bissau transitional organs and called for the international community to recognize and support the Transitional Government. It also suspended the general sanctions imposed on the country and urged all political actors and civil society to work together to achieve a truly inclusive government in order to ensure a consensual transition.

15. Following the meeting of the Peace and Security Council held in Addis Ababa on 14 July, the African Union released a communiqué in which it encouraged ECOWAS to pursue its efforts, in close coordination with other relevant international actors, notably CPLP, the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, towards the implementation of the decisions relating to the return to constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau. In the meantime, the membership of Guinea-Bissau in the African Union remained suspended.

16. Following a meeting of its Council of Ministers on 19 July in Maputo, CPLP issued a statement reaffirming its recognition of the deposed elected authorities of Guinea-Bissau. It also reiterated its call for the full restoration of constitutional order and the completion of the presidential electoral process in the country. CPLP

further called for close coordination between the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and CPLP, under the aegis of the United Nations, in establishing a partnership for the stabilization of the country. It pledged to work towards the holding of a high-level meeting to develop a comprehensive and integrated strategy aimed at the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau. The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, who attended the CPLP summit meeting of Heads of State and Government on 20 July in Maputo, stated that the European Union would not tolerate more coups in Guinea-Bissau and called for constitutional order to be respected.

17. On 1 August, Mr. Gomes Júnior met with Mr. Barroso in Lisbon where he commended the European Union for opposing the 12 April coup. Mr. Gomes Júnior also attended the meeting of the Africa Committee of the Socialist International held in Praia on 30 and 31 July, in his capacity as President of PAIGC. The Africa Committee has called for the re-establishment of democracy in Guinea-Bissau and urged the international community and regional organizations to act decisively in supporting the prompt return to normal functioning of the democratic institutions of the country.

18. An interparliamentary group from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) visited Guinea-Bissau from 4 to 7 September to foster dialogue with national authorities with a view to supporting the resolution of the crisis. The group also met with international stakeholders, including UNIOGBIS.

19. In continuation of his efforts to encourage the harmonization of the positions of Guinea-Bissau's international partners, my Special Representative commenced fortnightly meetings of international partners in Bissau on 4 June. He also facilitated a meeting with representatives of the African Union, ECOWAS, the European Union and PAIGC, at the latter's request, on 15 June. Furthermore, he spearheaded a joint African Union-United Nations mission with the African Union Special Representative in Guinea-Bissau, Ovidio Pequeno, to Cotonou on 26 and 27 August and Abuja from 27 to 29 August. In Cotonou, the mission met the African Union Chairperson, President Boni Yayi of Benin, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Benin. In Abuja, meetings were held with the ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and other senior officials. The Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat joined the mission for its discussions with the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa from 2 to 4 September, and with the CPLP leadership in Maputo from 5 to 7 September. My Special Representative also travelled to Lisbon with Mr. Pequeno from 9 to 11 September, to meet with the Portuguese authorities and Guinea-Bissau nationals based in Lisbon, including the deposed interim President and Prime Minister.

20. During its consultations, the mission expressed readiness to facilitate the reactivation of direct dialogue between ECOWAS and CPLP and highlighted the need for dialogue to arrive at a unified position. Both ECOWAS and CPLP expressed readiness to engage in dialogue. The CPLP leadership said it intended to engage in "frank and direct dialogue" with ECOWAS to identify common ground to enable both partners to work together with the support of the United Nations and the African Union. However, CPLP reiterated its non-recognition of the current transitional arrangements and the need for inclusive political participation by all national actors, including those deposed in April 2012. For its part, ECOWAS stressed that the basis for harmonization should be acceptance of the ongoing transitional arrangements.

3. Efforts towards a democratic electoral process

21. During the period under review, preparations for the general elections within the 12-month transitional period remained a major concern of national stakeholders. In its 20 July position paper, PAIGC criticized the Transitional Government for failing to inform the population of the steps required to advance the electoral process, in particular the extension of the mandate of the legislature, the conclusion of the electoral mapping process, the revision of electoral legislation to provide for the conduct of biometric voter registration, and the mobilization of financial resources for the electoral process.

22. On 19 July, Transitional President Nhamadjo announced in a press interview that general elections would take place in April 2013 and that the President-elect would take office in May 2013. On 18 August, the Transitional Government disbursed CFAF 30 million (approximately $60,000) to facilitate the completion of the electoral boundary mapping for the two remaining regions (Cacheu and Biombo) and the Bissau Autonomous Sector. The process, which started in 2011, had been delayed owing to lack of funds. While the Transitional Governments' contribution does not fully cover the costs needed to complete the mapping, the Transitional Government announced on 5 September that the exercise would be completed before the end of September 2012.

23. At the request of my Special Representative, an electoral advisory mission visited Guinea-Bissau from 22 to 31 August and listened to national and international interlocutors. In its discussions with partners, the mission pointed to the need to resolve political differences concerning technical issues that are important for a credible election. At the general level, preparations for the legislative and presidential elections have been hampered by a lack of coordination among the different agencies with responsibility for key electoral tasks. At a meeting between agencies charged with electoral responsibilities and international partners on 5 September, facilitated by the United Nations Development Programme at the request of the Transitional Government, the latter presented a timeline for the electoral process and draft budgets for the conduct of the legislative and presidential elections (€5.5 million), for the biometric voter registration exercise (estimated at €19 million) and for operational costs of the Technical Bureau for Support to the Electoral Process (€6.5 million).

24. During the meeting, international partners highlighted their concerns regarding the feasibility, credibility and sustainability of the electoral process. They also stressed the need for an inclusive dialogue in which all strata of society and political actors would be engaged, leading to the building of consensus around key issues, and raised concerns about the impasse in the National Assembly and the need to amend the electoral law. The Minister of Territorial Administration informed participants that an interministerial commission was working on a consolidated proposal to amend the electoral law to provide for the forthcoming presidential and legislative electoral processes.

B. Security situation

25. The security situation in the country remained stable. Guinea-Bissau troops are not visible on the streets, a sign that they have returned to their barracks as required by Security Council resolution 2048 (2012). However, although the "Military

Command" has formally returned power to civilian authorities, allegations continued to be made by national stakeholders of interference by the military leadership in the country's political affairs. Remarks by the military leadership on political issues have reportedly reinforced perceptions that the military still exercises power. It therefore remains critical for steps to be taken to reform the defence and security sector to ensure that military forces remain subordinate to civilian authorities.

26. On 23 August, the Armed Forces Chief of General Staff began a series of meetings with defence and security personnel in the east, south and north military commands. He cited the ousted Government's appeal for a peacekeeping force as justification for the coup d'état and accused the deposed Prime Minister of paying unidentified officers to stage a counter-coup. He also stated that there would be no peace in the barracks if Mr. Gomes Júnior returned to the country, and raised concern about the fate of the military if the deposed Prime Minister were to be elected.

27. ECOWAS and Guinea-Bissau's authorities initiated the drafting of a series of agreements on security sector reform. The agreements are expected to define the specific activities and projects listed in the ECOWAS/CPLP security sector reform road map, including the rehabilitation of military barracks in the country, the launching of the pension fund for retired military and police personnel, and training modules for the armed forces. The implementation of these projects is expected to continue beyond the transitional period. The ECOWAS Special Representative in Bissau has stressed to UNIOGBIS his organization's wish for cooperation on the implementation of the road map alongside the European Union, CPLP, UNIOGBIS and other interested international partners.

28. On 25 July, the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB) launched joint daily patrols with the Public Order Police. The ECOWAS force, whose strength stands at 510 personnel, is currently comprised of formed police units, led by a military field commander, and assisted by military staff officers, a medical corps and an engineering corps. An additional 118 military personnel from Nigeria will be deployed in the coming weeks to enable ECOMIB to reach its planned full capacity of 629. The contributing countries to ECOMIB are Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. The engineering corps has started to rehabilitate buildings to be used by the ECOMIB contingent. The medical corps is providing health services to ECOMIB personnel and civilians in Bissau.

29. Organized criminal groups engaged in international drug trafficking continued to take advantage of the prevailing unstable situation in Guinea-Bissau and the unchallenged use of the country as a transit point. The operational capacity of law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system continued to be weak, resulting in limited law enforcement capacity and very low interdiction, especially in regions outside Bissau. In the meantime, owing to the political context in Guinea-Bissau and the scarcity of resources, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has suspended the delivery of technical assistance to the country within the framework of the joint West Africa Coast Initiative.

III. Socioeconomic and humanitarian situation

30. The Transitional Government regularly paid civil servants' salaries, partially thanks to budgetary support provided by ECOWAS ($2 million), Nigeria ($10 million) and WAEMU ($1.5 million).

31. Support from the African Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank continued to be suspended. The World Bank dispatched an assessment mission to Guinea-Bissau from 27 to 30 August to review the situation, during which it informed international partners that it planned to recommend the resumption of disbursements on its existing programmes. The Peacebuilding Fund has also maintained the suspension of all its programmes in direct support of the Government, with the exception of the reallocation of $391,000 to an income generation project implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for the urgent purchase of seeds for 8,000 vulnerable families.

32. WAEMU and the West African Development Bank (BOAD) have continued with their portfolios of development projects agreed with the previous Government. BOAD has pledged $7 million in emergency food security support. The European Union, for its part, continued to provide direct project assistance to the population.

33. The transitional authorities have embarked on a campaign aimed at raising awareness among international leaders of Guinea-Bissau's needs. In that context, the Transitional Minister for Foreign Affairs, Faustino Embali, represented Guinea-Bissau at the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, held in Beijing on 21 and 22 July. The Transitional President attended the summit meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation held in Saudi Arabia on 14 and 15 August and the Sixteenth Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Tehran from 29 to 30 August. On his return from Tehran, Transitional President Nhamadjo announced that the Islamic Republic of Iran had agreed to a credit line of $20 million and donations of $3 million, $1 million and $600,000 to cover the cost of tractors and improvement of road infrastructure; medicines for the treatment of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis; and ambulances, respectively.

34. In June, the World Food Programme (WFP) carried out a rapid food security assessment in Biombo, Oio and Quinara regions which concluded that the 2011/12 crop production was less than that of the previous agricultural season in most communities, mainly owing to poor rainfall and limited farming inputs. On 15 August, FAO, WFP and key non-governmental organizations noted that price increases for basic foodstuffs were affecting Bissau and that it was too early to assess the impact of the emergency seed distribution project funded by the Peacebuilding Fund.

35. An initial estimate of the cashew nut crop in June pointed to a reduction of about 30 to 40 per cent against the record production of 2011. Exporters have been unable to sell some of their stock owing to falling international prices. These disruptions may have negative consequences for the revenue of exporters, thus affecting their livelihoods, as well as for the State coffers as cashew nuts accounted for 90 per cent of the country's export revenue in 2011.

36. The increase in the number of cases of acute diarrhoea, particularly in the cities of Bissau and Quinhamel, has forced the Epidemic Control Committee under the Ministry of Health to meet twice per week starting on 1 September. The Committee has established working groups to address specific issues in case a cholera epidemic is confirmed in the near future. In the meantime, various interventions are under way at community level, particularly in Bissau, with a special focus on information and sensitization of the population. A number of partners are procuring and prepositioning supplies for a minimal immediate and prompt response. Additional funding will be required to ensure an adequate and comprehensive response.

IV. Travel ban

37. Although the Guinea-Bissau Armed Forces Chief of General Staff, General António Indjai, is banned from travelling outside the country in accordance with Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), he reportedly travelled to Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, transiting through Senegal, to attend the meetings of the ECOWAS Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff held on 25 July and 18 August respectively. The Transitional Government has argued that these trips took place in furtherance of peace efforts in Guinea-Bissau and in the subregion.

V. Observations

38. I am concerned by the lack of progress towards the full restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau in compliance with Security Council resolution 2048 (2012) following the 12 April military coup d'état. The situation is exacerbated by the divisions, both among national stakeholders and among international partners, over the legitimacy of the current Transitional Government. In the meantime, the humanitarian and socioeconomic needs of the population continue to grow.

39. It is therefore imperative that the Transitional Government work closely with all segments of Guinea-Bissau society, including political parties and civil society organizations, to achieve a consensual, inclusive and nationally owned transition process, as called for by ECOWAS and the Security Council. In this regard, my Special Representative and his office will continue their efforts to promote a genuine dialogue among national stakeholders. I urge the people of Guinea-Bissau, in particular the Transitional Government, political leaders, civil society organizations and religious leaders, to take action to agree on a road map with clear benchmarks to ensure the full restoration of constitutional order in the country.

40. I am also concerned that regional, continental and international organizations remain divided over the transitional arrangements and on how best to move towards the full restoration of constitutional rule in Guinea-Bissau. While ECOWAS has endorsed the Transitional Government and called for the international community to support it, CPLP continues to call for the reinstatement of the elected authorities overthrown in April 2012. This is contributing to the stagnation of the political crisis in Guinea-Bissau. In this context, the harmonization of the positions of these two organizations, which are major partners of Guinea-Bissau, is of paramount importance. The joint mission of the African Union and the United Nations was an

initial step in helping to bridge the differences between ECOWAS and CPLP. My Special Representative will continue to work with both organizations to help them harmonize their positions and act in unison to promote the interests of the people of Guinea-Bissau.

41. The political impasse in Guinea-Bissau has brought the country to a virtual standstill. The operational capacity of the Transitional Government is reduced by paralysis in the National Assembly, which is expected to pass legislation necessary for the functioning of State institutions and for the conduct of a democratic electoral process. The impasse in the National Assembly is a central obstacle to the electoral process. In this context, I urge the Transitional Government to redouble its efforts to resume the functioning of the National Assembly and facilitate a speedy approval of the electoral reform package. I also encourage it to take prompt action to consolidate the work of the different election management agencies. I strongly encourage all political actors to work together, including with the Transitional Government, to contribute towards meeting this objective. In this regard, I have requested my Special Representative to intensify his efforts to support dialogue among political actors with a view to ensuring that the National Assembly can play its constitutional role.

42. The main objective of the political transition should be to return the country to full constitutional order in the shortest possible time frame. However, I am concerned that questions have emerged about the commitment of the Transitional Government to hold the elections within the allocated transitional time frame.

43. Guinea-Bissau's political actors have often cited exclusion as a key reason for political instability. I therefore welcome the decision of PAIGC to engage with the Transitional President and the Transitional Government, as the party has a major contribution to make to a sound and peaceful transition. All stakeholders must feel that they have a stake in the whole process, which should culminate in credible and transparent general elections, after which national stakeholders would build a vision for a society where good governance and rule of law are the hallmarks of restored constitutional order.

44. The elections are a cornerstone of democracy, but are not a panacea to overcome the deep divisions in the country and ensure sustainable peace and stability. The Government that will emerge from the elections must therefore work with national stakeholders to develop a vision for a common future in a collaborative and broad-based manner that embraces all walks of life, urban and rural populations, as well as the Guinea-Bissau diaspora.

45. While efforts are under way to ensure credible and transparent elections, I call upon political and military actors in particular to act within the framework of the rule of law and to respect the rules of democratic elections. The Guinea-Bissau electorate has an exemplary record of exercising its political rights in a peaceful and orderly manner. All stakeholders, including political, military and civil society actors, should consider developing and subscribing to a binding code of conduct before, during and after the elections, which would help reduce electoral tensions and would contribute to a peaceful electoral process.

46. In compliance with Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), the United Nations is also prepared to work with national and international stakeholders to develop "a comprehensive integrated strategy with concrete measures aimed at

implementing security sector reform, political and economic reforms, combating drug-trafficking and fighting impunity".

47. I commend the staff of UNIOGBIS, under the leadership of my Special Representative, Joseph Mutaboba, and the entire United Nations country team, as well as members of the broader international community and national and international non-governmental organizations, for their continued contribution to peacebuilding efforts in Guinea-Bissau.